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ABSTRACT

Valencia Community College's (VCC's) Faculty Academy was established to assist new tenure-track faculty successfully meet the college's criteria for tenure. In planning the Academy, surveys were conducted with administrators, full-time faculty and staff, and 34 new tenure-track faculty who were to participate in the Academy regarding their perceptions of areas that would be beneficial to new faculty. In addition, Robert Boice's views of faculty development provided the theoretical framework for the Academy. This framework holds that successful faculty members are active in departmental, college, student, and other out-of-class assignments; are able to identify and prioritize activities and issues; practice self-management; and have time to socialize with colleagues, students, and professionals. Six outcomes of an accomplished teacher were also developed to form the program's mission statement. The Academy consists of a 9-hour graduate school program or 135 contact hours over a 3-year period. Based on individual needs, faculty choose approximately half of the required hours in the program. The remaining 65 hours focus on such topics as collaborative learning, cultural diversity, critical thinking, assessment and placement, distance learning, computer literacy, classroom research, classroom feedback, test construction, and college history. In addition, participants attend at least one Board of Trustees meeting, videotape at least one class presentation for self-critique, and develop a portfolio and a group project. (KP)

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Paper presented at the Annual International Conference of the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development on Teaching Excellence and Conference of Administrators. (16th, Austin, TX, May 22-25, 1994)

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Valencia Community College
Faculty Academy: Preparing New Faculty for Tenure

presented at NISOD's
16th Annual International Conference on Teaching Excellence
& Conference of Administrators
May 1994
Austin, Texas
by

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The purpose of today's presentation is to discuss the Valencia Community College Faculty Academy. Heretofore, Valencia Community College had few requirements to be met by faculty relative to granting of tenure. In essence, faculty members who taught at the college for the three years in a tenure-track position were automatically awarded tenure. The faculty association, in collaboration with administration, developed additional specific criteria that must be met prior to the award of tenure. Valencia Community College created a Faculty Academy training program for new tenure-track faculty to assist new faculty in successfully meeting the tenure criteria. This is important because we in public education are accountable to the taxpayers who underwrite our institutions. The Faculty Academy pre-tenure training program is one way of ensuring that tax dollars are well spent at Valencia Community College.

Tenure at Valencia Community College is for accomplished teachers and is not a lifetime contract. The criteria for granting tenure to Valencia full-time faculty include: student evaluations, departmental evaluations, annual evaluations, and successful completion of the Faculty Academy which is specifically required by contract for newly hired full-time faculty. This year the 34 new tenure-track faculty members are the largest number of tenure-track faculty ever employed in a single year. These new professors will have a great deal of influence on the direction the college takes currently, and in the future. We, at Valencia, pride ourselves on having collaboration among administration, faculty and staff with regard to governance and accountability. Therefore, it is imperative that these new faculty members have the knowledge and skills to participate effectively in the college. While we certainly emphasize performance in the classroom, we also ask our faculty to be leaders within the college community and the Faculty Academy is one way of facilitating their participation and development.

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Valencia Community College is one of Florida's 28 public community colleges. It is located in Central Florida, serving Orange and Osceola counties, including the city of Orlando. Founded in 1967, the college has grown from 500 students to serving over 34,000 credit students in day, evening, weekend and distance learning programs. Organizationally, the college operates from three campuses and three centers. Each campus is under a modified matrix management system. Each campus has a provost who is its chief operating officer, and on two of these the campus provost assumes a collegewide duty - instruction in the case of the west campus provost, economic development for the central campus provost. The Faculty Academy is chiefly the responsibility of the Vice President of Instructional Affairs and the Provost of the West Campus, and the Office of Instructional Affairs, with great assistance from the other provosts, vice presidents, department chairmen, deans and directors, and of course, the college president.

A word about the college environment. Valencia has always sought to be, and has been regarded as, an excellent community college at the local, state and national level. Numerous studies and publications have cited the college's quest for excellence through its innovative programs and activities. In fact, the college's mission statement specifies that it be known as an innovative leader in community college education. Goal number one of Valencia's Strategic Plan calls for the college to pursue excellence in education to the limits of its fiscal, physical and human resources, while goal two articulates the need for quality staff if goal one is to be achieved. Stated differently, these goals recognize that the central purpose of the college is education, and that the vitality of its faculty and staff is central to the vitality of its culture, which is teaching and learning.

Another significant aspect of its environment is the collaborative nature of its governance and management systems by striving to have faculty, staff and administration share common values such as: being student centered, being intentional in services, being accountable to its various constituencies, being personally responsible for professional development, maintaining a social contract with the college while enjoying the benefits of academic freedom. These, as well as other shared values, have shaped the organizational culture into which the Academy was planned and implemented.

THE ACADEMY

The planners of the Academy were cognizant of the aforementioned factors and the college's current efforts in staff development, including its highly effective College Level Teaching Core[1]. Using this knowledge, the planners conducted surveys with the following groups to ascertain what areas would be beneficial to new faculty: the administration, full-time faculty and staff, and the 34 newly-employed faculty who were to participate. As an aside, this was the largest number of tenure-track faculty employed at one time in the college's history and would represent over 20% of the 10-month teaching faculty of the college. Participation in the program was a condition of employment as were willingness to teach at night, on weekends or on other campuses; service on college committees; sponsorship of student clubs and organizations; and

revising and developing courses. Concomitant with the surveys, the planners conducted a review of the literature on staff development programs, organizational dynamics, new faculty training programs, college teaching in general and sought the wisdom and advice of numerous consultants.

One of the key resources used in the development of the Academy was the work done by Dr. Robert Boice, who has authored numerous publications on faculty development. His most recent book entitled The New Faculty Member, (Jossey-Bass, 1992), provided the architecture or framework within which the Academy operates. A simplified version of Dr. Boice's theory of IRSS for new faculty is as described below.

Involvement ("I") recognizes that new faculty who become active in departmental, college, student, and other out-of-class assignments are more successful. These individuals show a genuine interest in getting to know the college, the students, the demographics, the body politic and the other nuances that occur in the college environment. Dr. Boice further states that successful new faculty are Regimented ("R"), meaning that they can identify and prioritize the right issues. They do not waste their time or energy on activities or issues that do not produce the kind of results or outcomes that they are seeking. They know inherently, or have learned, when there is enough material for their facts and principles lecture, they can set aside working on course syllabus and the many other activities which contribute to the overwhelming stresses and pressures of a new faculty member. They then have time to work on innovation. They are idea people. Said differently, these people prepare or inherently know a prioritized "things-to-do" list. Furthermore, successful faculty practice Self-management ("S") or self-discipline by acting on their "things-to-do" list. How many of us write the list but then never check them off? Successful faculty get things done - they are the right things, and still have time to Socialize ("S") with colleagues, students, professionals, etc. According to Boice, socialization is fundamental because it allows a faculty member to get new ideas, find out what works and what doesn't, be more open to change and grow professionally. This willingness demonstrates a self-confidence in admitting that they are lifelong learners and proud of it. These, then - Involvement, Regimen, Self-Management, Socialization - are the framework for Valencia's Academy. These comprehensive planning efforts led to the Academy's assumptions, philosophy, mission, values, activities and assessment.

The Academy assumes

1. Faculty desire to be good teachers;
2. Faculty desire to be part of the college;
3. Tenure was to recognize accomplished teachers and not merely provide lifetime employment;
4. The program had to be holistic, intentional and systematic;
5. The program had to be a collaborative effort involving various parts of the college as well as the participants;
6. The program needed to be based on research;
7. The program had to be outcome-oriented and measurable;
8. That faculty are performers who, like other performers, must continue to

improve;

9. That learning is an active process;
10. The program needed to be open-ended so that as new faculty were employed they could enter into the program;
11. The program should be a modeling activity for its participants to use in the classroom;
12. The program had to limit the amount of out-of-classroom time for the first year;
13. The program had to, to the extent possible, enable the new faculty to bond with each other, and to the college;
14. Finally, that no program, however well intended or designed, would be perfect and that changes would be an ongoing element of the program.

The Academy's philosophy was grounded in the belief that its sole intent was to help faculty become accomplished teachers and leaders and therefore earn tenure. The college recognized that they had employed excellent faculty members and the goal of the Academy was to make them better.

The next step in developing the architecture for the Academy was to identify the outcomes of an accomplished teacher. These were developed after a careful review of the research on teaching in higher education and also the National Standards for Teachers Project of the Carnegie Endowment. The following outcomes were delineated:

1. Professional educators commit to students.
2. Professional educators commit to mastery of their teaching field and subject matter.
3. Professional educators coordinate and monitor the teaching/learning process through systematic and critical analysis.
4. Professional educators create a learning community supporting continuing professional and intellectual development.
5. Professional educators create an excitement for learning within their students which promotes life-long learning.
6. Professional educators expand student and personal horizons by seeking and expanding relationships between other disciplines and their own.

These six outcomes become the basis for the mission statement of the Academy which is "to develop a professional corps of tenured professors who will lead the college toward instructional excellence into the 21st century." The Faculty Academy Values:

1. Well prepared and qualified college faculty.
2. Faculty who are student-centered.
3. Faculty who will create an environment to facilitate the teaching/learning process.
4. Faculty who recognize that the end result of teaching is learning.
5. Faculty who take personal responsibility for professional development.
6. Faculty who are committed to the college's philosophy and mission.
7. Faculty who participate in the governance of the college.

8. Faculty who participate in the community..
9. Faculty who are committed to appropriate ethical and moral behavior.
10. Faculty who understand the responsibilities as well as the privileges of academic freedom.
11. Faculty who recognize the cultural diversity of the student body and identify the contributions of those various cultures in their coursework.
12. Faculty who are open to the application of technology in the teaching/learning process.
13. Faculty who use in-class and other forms of research as a means of improving the learning process.
14. Faculty who recognize the importance of the authenticity of grades.
15. Faculty who recognize the importance of a faculty portfolio, student assessment of instruction, peer and other forms of assessment in order to improve teaching and learning.
16. Faculty who appreciate and follow the organization and administrative policies developed by the college and the state's higher education system.
17. Faculty who see the importance of articulation with K-12 institutions and colleges and universities.
18. Faculty who maintain high academic standards and assume personal responsibility for their maintenance.
19. Faculty who strive to retain students using a variety of methodologies.
20. Faculty who incorporate CLAST and college outcomes into their coursework.
21. Faculty who believe in the use of a variety of instructional methodologies in order to work with students from a variety of backgrounds.
22. Faculty who are committed to meeting with students outside of class.
23. Faculty who recognize and participate in departmental, campus and college social activities.

DYNAMIC SYNERGISM PARADIGM

The Dynamic Synergism Paradigm refers to the fact that the program at the Faculty Academy is ever-changing based on the personal and external assessment of the faculty members' knowledge, skills and attitudes as they participate in the various activities in the program. The synergism refers to the fact that the program is greater than the sum of its parts because as faculty members grow professionally, the program will affect students in the classroom, college committees and the functioning of the college through a more enlightened faculty. The planners believe this will occur because the program focuses on the individual faculty member's personal knowledge, skills and attitudes, coupled with their relationship or contract not only with students, but also colleagues, college and community. Most of the aforementioned is self-explanatory. It is believed that faculty members will have a greater understanding of the college since they will have a better understanding of the various functions of the college and how each relates to the classroom. For example, the collaborative role student services play with instruction through assessment and placement, retention, service learning,

student activities, as well as counseling and advisement. In so doing, faculty will gain insights into the role that assessment and placement in an open door institution plays in the dilemma of high academic standards and high retention of students. In addition, faculty members will have a better understanding of the critical role that college preparatory (developmental education) plays at a college that enrolls approximately 50% of its first-time-in-college students who are not academically prepared to take college work. The program is highly interactive, and places emphasis on what is learned as opposed to what is being taught. It is believed that this principle will be carried into the classroom; that faculty will assume personal responsibility for their development using personal reflection and external assessment; and by experiencing collaborative activities as well as other teaching and learning strategies, faculty will use them in the classroom. The goal is to enable faculty to work smarter, not harder, and therefore become more productive by focusing on what students are supposed to be able to know and do. It is moving faculty from being a "sage on the stage" to becoming more of a "guide on the side." Careful consideration has been made of the fact that these participants come to the program with a wealth of knowledge, skills and abilities, and therefore have their own reality about community college teaching. The program intent is to demonstrate to each another reality so that a chain of the events, such as their own critical thinking and learning, may be set in motion. It is a reminder of how each of them learn and problem-solve, just as they wish for their students.

ORGANIZATION OF THE ACADEMY

Structurally, the Academy's activities are based upon a 9-hour graduate school program or 135 contact hours over a 3-year period. Faculty are eligible for tenure after three years of service at Valencia. Based upon their own individual needs to meet the outcomes, faculty choose approximately ½ of the required hours in the program. This could be designing and developing new courses, attending graduate school, workshops and seminars, making presentations, and a variety of other activities. The remaining 65 or so hours focus on topics such as: collaborative learning, cultural diversity, critical thinking, assessment and placement, distance learning, computer literacy, classroom research, classroom feedback, test construction, college history, philosophy and organization, to name a few. In addition, each participant visits every campus and center, attends at least one Board of Trustees meeting, videotapes at least one class presentation (for self-critique), attends at least two classes (one within their discipline and one out of their discipline), develops a portfolio, and develops one group or team project. As part of our efforts to make our courses relevant, each member will visit five corporations to learn what skills, knowledge and attitudes business requires of our students.

Using both formative and summative assessment procedures, participants as well as the Academy planners are given continuous feedback, not only on the six outcomes, but also on changing the program as needed. The program has been in existence for two semesters and the Academy has received many compliments and comments on the fact that the college has initiated such an effort. Participants feel that they are part of the college as opposed to an individual department or campus, and that they have learned new teaching strategies or have been reminded of them.

As the program continues and additional members are added, it is expected to change. But in a rapidly changing world, what better way to teach coping with change than to have faculty experience it? After all, our students must develop these skills if they are to be successful.

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1. The College-Level Teaching Core (CLTC) is a 15 contact hour extended orientation program for all new full- and part-time faculty members at Valencia Community College. The CLTC was developed jointly by Valencia and the University of Central Florida, under the direction of Randall H. Stovall. Several hundred new faculty and graduate teaching assistants have participated in CLTC workshops, which included discussions on such topics as academic freedom, course planning, professional behaviors and harassment, effective lecture and discussion techniques, testing and more. The CLTC was described in a presentation on Valencia's adjunct faculty program at the 1991 NISOD conference.